

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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P R 100505Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1885

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC HONOLULU

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 22458

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.OM 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH

SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY HUMMEL'S MEETINGS WITH THAI PRIME
MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER

1. DURING COURSE OF BANGKOK STOPOVER ASSISTANT SECRETARY
HUMMEL MET SEPARATELY WITH PRIME MINISTER SENI PRAMOT AND
FOREIGN MINISTER PHICHAIRATTAKUN.

2. IN HALF HOUR MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, WHICH WAS
NOT ATTENDED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER, FOLLOWING SUBJECTS WERE
TOUCHED ON BRIEFLY:

A. SENI ASKED FOR USG VIEWS ON RTG DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS WITH
SRVN. HUMMEL SAID USG IS SKEPTICAL ABOUT REAL SRVN LONG-TERM
OBJECTIVES, BUT THAT WE HAD NOT TRIED TO INFLUENCE ASEAN COUNTRIES'
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DECISIONS ON OPENING RELATIONS. AS BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH SEA

COUNTRIES DEVELOPED THERE WOULD BE BETTER MUTUAL PERCEPTIONS OF EACH OTHER, AND SRVN WOULD PROVE TO BE TOUGH GOVERNMENT TO DEAL WITH. SENI (AND FOREIGN MINISTER LATERL) STRESSED THAT RTG HAD NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT VIETNAMESE, AND HAD GIVEN AWAY NOTHING TO HANOI.

B. SENI MADE REFERENCE TO RECENT VISIT BY RTG OFFICIALS TO HANOI AND NOTED ELLIPTICALLY THAT IF U.S. COULD FIND A WAY TO MAKE A GESTURE TOWARD THE NORTH VIETNAMESE THIS CONCEIVABLY WOULD EASE DEMANDS HANOI MIGHT BE INCLINED TO MAKE ON THAI AND OTHER ASEAN GOVERNMENTS DURING THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZING BILATERAL RELATIONS. HUMMEL RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT AS THE PRIME MINISTER UNDERSTOOD, U.S. POSITION WAS THAT HANOI MUST BE FORTHCOMING ON THE QUESTION OF INFORMATION REGARDING AMERICANS MISSING IN ACTION AS A FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS IN ANY BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN HANOI AND WASHINGTON. FURTHERMORE, AS OF NOW HANOI WAS TAKING THE STAND THAT THE UNITED STATES OWED ENORMOUS AMOUNTS OF REPARATIONS TO HANOI. THIS WAS VIEWED AS A LEGAL OBLIGATION BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WHICH WE, OF COURSE, DID NOT ACCEPT.

C. THE PRIME MINISTER REFERRED TO THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES COMING INTO THAILAND FROM INDOCHINA COUNTRIES AND PROBLEMS THEY POSED IN TERMS OF FINANCIAL BURDEN ON THE THAI GOVERNMENT. HE MUSED THAT THAI MUST CONSIDER CLOSING THE BORDER TO SUCH REFUGEES AND HE WONDERED ABOUT AMERICAN ASSISTANCE IN THEIR RESETTLEMENT. HUMMEL REPLIED THAT USG UNDERSTOOD THIS PROBLEM AND WE WERE CONTINUING TO GIVE ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE UNHCR TO ASSIST IN PROVIDING SUBSISTENCE FOR REFUGEES. WE FELT, HOWEVER, THAT USG HAS ALREADY DONE A GREAT DEAL IN ACCEPTING REFUGEES INTO THE UNITED STATES AND THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS MUST ALSO CONSIDER ACCEPTING REFUGEES FOR PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT. PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED SUSPICION THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE MAY BE PUSHING LAO REFUGEES ACROSS THE BORDER AS A TACTIC; FOR THIS REASON THAI GOVERNMENT WAS DISINCLINED TO ENTERTAIN LAO SUGGESTION THAT FURTHER CROSSING POINTS BE OPENED AT THIS TIME.

D. ASSISTANT SECRETARY HUMMEL ASKED THE PRIME MINISTER WHAT HIS VIEW WAS OF CURRENT U.S. FORWARD DEPLOYMENTS IN THE PACIFIC, CONFIDENTIAL

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NOTING THAT THE U.S. BASES RAN FROM KOREA AND JAPAN TO THE PHILIPPINES AND INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN AT DIEGO GARCIA THE PRIME MINISTER RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT THE CURRENT U.S. FORWARD POSITIONS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AND WERE NECESSARY AS A BALANCE TO OTHER POTENTIALLY HOSTILE FORCES IN THE REGION.

E. SECRETARY GENERAL TO THE PRIME MINISTER, NITIPHAT CHALICHAN, (WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT AT THIS MEETING) MADE REFERENCE TO THE

FORTHCOMING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN THE UNITED STATES AND SAID THAT THERE WAS AN IMPRESSION IN THAILAND THAT THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY MIGHT ESPOUSE A FOREIGN POLICY FOR THE U.S. MORE ISOLATIONIST THAN HAD BEEN THE CASE IN THE RECENT PAST. IN RESPONSE, MR. HUMMEL SAID THAT HE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT FOREIGN POLICY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES WERE NOT GREAT, JUDGING BY THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM AND THE POSITIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKEN SO FAR BY LEADING CANDIDATES.

R. THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY ASKED ABOUT THAI-BURMA RELATIONS. PRIME MINISTER SENI PRAMOT REPLIED THAT RELATIONS WERE UNCHANGED; NOTE WAS MADE OF THE FACT THAT THE JOINT THAI-BURMA BORDER COMMISSION HAD NOT BEEN ACTIVE. ON HIS PART THE PRIME MINISTER ASKED ABOUT THE CURRENT U.S. POLICY TOWARD THE NE WIN GOVERNMENT, TO WHICH MR. HUMMEL REPLIED THAT WE HAD BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE RANGOON GOVERNMENT ON THE QUESTION OF NARCOTICS AND NARCOTICS CONTROL AND THAT THIS WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT BILATERAL ISSUE AS OF NOW, ADDING THAT NARCOTICS ALONE WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT A SUBJECT ON WHICH A BROAD BASED U.S.-GUB RELATIONSHIP COULD BE DEVELOPED. HUMMEL NOTED THAT USG HAD STRONG INTEREST IN NARCOTICS CONTROL IN THAILAND ALSO, AND HOPED FOR CONTINUED EFFECTIVE COOPERATION WITH RTG. ASKED WHETHER OR NOT THE UNITED STATES MIGHT BE CONTEMPLATING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO BURMA, THE REPLY WAS THAT THE USG FELT THAT THE IFI'S WERE IN THE BEST POSITION TO ASSIST BURMA. THE IFI'S COULD GIVE SOUND FISCAL ADVICE TO THE GTVERNMENT WHICH WOULD NOT BE OPEN TO THE SAME MISINTERPRETATION THAT SUCH ADVICE WOULD RECEIVE COMING FROM ANOTHER GOVERNMENT.

G. ASKED ABOUT RELATIONS WITH MALAYSIA, PRIME MINISTER SENI REPLIED THAT COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO SUPPRESS THE INSURGENCY ON THE BORDER HAD ONLY BEEN PARTIALLY SUCCESSFUL AND THAT MORE COULD BE DONE IN THIS AREA.
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H. MR. HUMMEL, BEFORE CONCLUSION OF THE INTERVIEW, ASKED THE PRIME MINISTER FOR THAI SUPPORT ON THE KOREAN QUESTION IN THE UNTIED NATIONS. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE NORTH KOREAN WOULD BE REDOUBLING THEIR EFFORTS IN THE NEXT SESSION OF THE UNGA AND IT WAS HOPED THAT FRIENDS OF THE UNITED STATES, SUCH AS THAILAND, COULD SUPPORT THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT. SENI REPLIED THAT THE THAI GOVERNMENT WAS UNDER PRESSURE FROM BOTH SIDES ON THE MATTER AND SUGGESTED HE TAKE THIS UP WITH FOREIGN MINISTER PHICHAJ. (AT THE LUNCHEON SECRETARY HUMMEL DID ASK PHICHAJ FOR SUPPORT ON THE QUESTION.)

3. FOREIGN MINISTER PHICHAJ HOSTED A LAVISH LUNCH FOR ASSITANT SECRETARY HUMMEL. THE GUEST LIST INCLUDED UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE ANAN PANYARACHUN, SEVEFAL RANKING MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT,

BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY, AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND JOURNALISTS DRAWN FROM LEADING BANGKOK NEWSPAPERS. A PRIVATE INTERVIEW WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER WHICH PRECEDED THIS LUNCH WAS DEVOTED ALMOST ENTIRELY TO PHICHA'S IMPRESSIONS OF HIS RECENT VISIT TO HANOI.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 22458

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

A. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THEY FOUND THE NORTH VIETNAMESE TO BE TOUGH NEGOTIATORS BUT THAT THEIR DEMANDS HAD NOT BEEN IMPOSSIBLE. HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT HANOI WAS FACED WITH MANY IMPORTANT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND THAT THESE DISTRACTIONS PROBABLY INHIBITED THE NORTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT FROM BEING TOO AGGRESSIVE IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH THE THAI AND OTHER ASEAN GOVERNMENTS. HE SENSED ALSO THAT THERE WAS CONTINUING TROUBLE IN THE SOUTH AND THAT NORTH VIETNAM WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY IN CONSOLIDATING AND BRINGING UNDER TOTAL CONTROL THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE.

B. HUMMEL WAS ASKED WHAT THE U.S. VIEW WAS OF THE CURRENT

SITUATION IN VIETNAM AND HUMMEL REPLIED THAT OUR ANALYSTS FEEL THAT THE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH WILL POSE A SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR SOME TIME TO COME AND CONCEIVABLY MIGHT REQUIRE THE IMPOSITION OF HARSH MEASURES BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE. PHICHAI ASKED ALSO ABOUT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED
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BY THE AMERICANS WHO HAD JUST RECENTLY BEEN PERMITTED TO LEAVE SOUTH VIETNAM. AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE INFORMED HIM THAT THE GROUP HAD BEEN A "MIXED BAG" AND THAT THERE WAS NO CLEAR CONSENSUS WITHIN THE GROUP REGARDING CONDITIONS IN THE SOUTH. THOSE WHO FAVORED THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER HAD BEEN FAIRLY GLOWING IN THEIR COMMENTS WHILE THOSE WHO WERE NOT IDEOLOGICALLY COMMITTED NOTED DEFICIENCIES, PARTICULARLY ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

C. PHICHAI SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND GREAT CONTRAST BETWEEN PEKING AND HANOI IN HIS VISITS TO THOSE TWO CAPITALS. HE SENSED A CONSIDERABLE LACK OF TENSION IN HANOI WHICH HAD BEEN ALL-PERVASIVE IN PEKING. IN NORTH VIETNAM THE ATMOSPHERE SEEMED CONSIDERABLY EASIER WITH THE POPULACE MOVING ABOUT THE CAPITAL IN AN UNREGIMENTED FASHION AND WITH SMALL COMMERCE FLURISHING. HUMMEL NOTED THAT AMERICAN ANALYSTS FELT THAT THE POPULATION OF NORTH VIETNAM WOULD BE UNWILLING TO SUSTAIN AUSTERITY MEASURES OVER A LONG PERIOD, PARTICULARLY NOW THAT THE WAR IS OVER. HE SAID THAT THE USG REMAINED CAUTIOUS AND RESERVED IN ESTIMATES OF SRVN OBJECTIVES, NOTING HOWEVER THAT THE USG HAD NOT ATTEMPTED TO DISCOURAGE CONTACT BETWEEN ASEAN NATIONS AND HANOI.

D. THE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS ASKED WHETHER AMBASSADORS WOULD BE EXCHANGED BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. PHICHAI REPLIED THAT PHAN HIEN WOULD LIKE TO SEND A TRADE MISSION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO BANGKOK AND TO THE OTHER ASEAN CAPITALS. THE EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS WITH THAILAND WOULD TAKE PLACE SOME TIME LATER. PHICHAI SAID HE HAD TOLD THE NORTH VIETNAMESE THAT THE VIETNAMESE CHANCERY IN BANGKOK WAS AVAILABLE TO THEM. PHAN HIEN HAD INFORMED PHICHAI THAT THE THAI WOULD BE EXPECTED TO BUILD A MISSION IN HANOI WITHIN A DIPLOMATIC COMPOUND THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ARE SETTING FORTH FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS. IT WAS SUGGESTED THE CHANCERY BE CONSTRUCTED IN THAI STYLE WITH MATERIALS BROUGHT INTO THE NORTH FOR THE PURPOSE.

E. PHICHAI SAID THAT HE HAD SEEN A FEW RUSSIANS AND FEW CUBANS IN HANOI AND IT HAD BEEN INTERESTING TO HIM THAT THE VIETNAMESE DID NOT MENTION CHINA NOR RUSSIA IN THEIR DISCUSSIONS. HE SAID HE HAD TAXED THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WITH SUPPORTING THE INSURGENCY IN THAILAND BUT THEY HAD NOT RESPONDED TO HIS CHARGE, NOT EVEN TO DENY IT. PHAN HIEN HAD RAISED THE SUBJECT OF THE U.S.
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MILITARY REMAINING IN THAILAND (THE REMAINING JUSMAG CONTINGENT) AND PHICHAI SAID HE HAD RESPONDED THAT THESE ELEMENTS WERE IN COUNTRY ON THE BASIS OF A LONG-STANDING TREATY WITH THAILAND'S AMERICAN FRIENDS AND IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THAILAND HAVE SUCH ASSISTANCE IN BUILDING ITS ARMY.

F. INTERESTING, THAT NO REFERENCE WAS MADE IN ANY OF THESE TALKS TO RESIDUAL ARRANGEMENTS INVOLVING AIT, TAKHLI OR ICS.

4. COMMENT: VISIT PARTICULARLY TIMELY IN VIEW OF JUST COMPLETED VISIT BY RTG DELEGATION TO HANOI/VIENTIANE. THAI OBVIOUSLY WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO ASSURE HUMMEL, AND THROUGH HIM, THE USG THAT THAI GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO ASSIGN HIGHEST VALUE AND IMPORTANCE TO CONTINUING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE U.S., AND WISHED TO ASSURE THAT OVERTURES TO SRV AND LAO GOVERNMENT WERE NOT MEANT TO IMPLY RTG INTENTION TO DOWNGRADE RELATIONS WITH U.S. SIGNIFICANT, TOO, THAT FOREIGN MINISTER'S LUNCH INCLUDED KEY REPRESENTATIVES FROM RTAF, PARLIAMENT AND FOURTH ESTATE. PHICHAI, OBVIOUSLY, WANTED THESE PEOPLE TO GET THE "MESSAGE" THAT SENI GOVERNMENT STILL VERY INTERESTED IN CLOSE FRIENDLY TIES WITH U.S.
WHITEHOUSE

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